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We really have come a long way

For the eighth time in 30 years Virginia Slims has polled a representative sampling of America's women and men. In celebrating its 30th year, the Opinion Poll found women to be quite upbeat and optimistic as we roll into this new millennium.

HERSPECTIVE



By ELAINE K.
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with the slogan, "You've come a long way, baby." So, it's only fitting that this latest poll should affirm that saying. Six out of 10 women (60 percent) think that young adult women 20 years from now can look forward to a better life. This is up from 52 percent in 1990, the last time Roper Starch (Virginia Slims' research firm) polled Americans.

Two-thirds (67 percent) of executive women predict that life will be better and almost as many (63 percent) white collar or clerical females agree. Only 56 percent of women in blue-collar jobs see a brighter future coming.

The most intriguing data centered on the questions about what the outlook for young women would be 20 years from now.

Poll sponsor Virginia Slims began its corporate life

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A greater percentage of women (68 percent) living in the Northeast and West think better lives await young women.

I find this heartening because I remember thinking I would never be as old as I am now 30 years ago, with no thought of how good life might be.

Young women of tomorrow will take part in a brighter future. Many more doors will be open (and a few ceilings shattered) to them than even their mothers could have envisioned.

Thirty years ago, it was a big deal if a young woman decided to pursue an engineering degree or aspired to become an astronaut. Today it's nearly commonplace.

In 1980, the pink collar ghetto was a bit more populous. Twenty years from now, let's hope it doesn't exist. By that time, women shouldn't have to worry about whether they are earning the same as the man sitting next to them for doing the same job.

Despite the rosy outlook for the future, there are some things that never change.

Men agree that women are handling most of the household chores. They are, however, just as likely to agree that household tasks should be evenly divided. Most women say they do more: laundry, ironing, routine housecleaning, cooking meals, taking kids to after-school activities and their friends' houses and grocery shopping. Nearly 60 percent of the women don't feel guilty about *not* doing all the housework.

The most telling statistic was this: The same number of women and men (30 percent) say that they frequently disagree with their mate about which TV programs to watch.

Don't wait 20 years to solve that problem — get another TV, now.

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